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TWO SONNETS IN MEMORY OF JOHN KEATS

I

“O TERQUE QUATERQUE BEATE”—

Young priest of Beauty, dead a hundred years,
Alive until this whirling earth be dead,
Garlands we bring for that low-couchèd head,
Dark violets, and the rose : for you no tears,
So long escaped all fevers and all fears,
And love misprized, and scorn unmerited;
So long to that divine pure Essence wed,
The soul of Beauty, and starred among your peers.

O happy, who had known before the end
The lucent primrose and the nightingale,
Old marbles, and the vast voice of the deep,
And the rich page of many an antique tale;
And whose last sight before you fell asleep
Was, God be thanked, the good face of a friend !

II

THE CLUE

He figured Life a House of mystic rooms,
One golden-lit, yet opening sudden doors
On dark paths piercing, as the blind mole bores,
To the heart of earth; caverns more chill than tombs,
Deep crypts of misery, immemorial glooms;
Long passages of pain the soul explores,
Vague-haunted by the moan from all dim shores
Whereon man suffers his mysterious dooms.

“We, if we live”, he said, “shall find our way
Through those dark passages”; and to the last
He clung to Beauty as his secret clue:
Death clutched him ere he came to the clear day;
Live Beauty, in that young, dead hand held fast,
Shines in the dark to lead our spirits through.

HELEN GRAY CONE.

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